

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00  
DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 /034 W  
-----127449 290330Z /73

R 281734Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1443

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, ETRD, GT

SUBJ: EASTERN--BRANIFF INTEREST IN US/GUATEMALA ROUTE

REF: (A) GUATEMALA 4358 (B) GUATEMALA 4413

1. SUMMARY: BRANIFF AND EASTERN REPS RECENTLY CALLED ON GOG DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION (DGAC) TO EXPRESS THEIR INTEREST IN US/GUATEMALA ROUTES. GOG APPEARS FAVORABLY DISPOSED. THE DGAC INFORMALLY REQUESTS BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND SUITABLE MODEL ARRANGEMENTS FROM THE EMBASSY, BUT EXCLUDES THE POSSIBILITY OF A BILATERAL BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING COURTESY CALL BY EMBOFFS ON NEW DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION, COL. ROBERTO SALAZAR, HE REITERATED (REFTEL A) THAT THE LUCAS ADMINISTRATION FAVORS A LIBERALIZED AIR TRANSPORT POLICY (LOCALLY CALLED "OPEN SKIES") AND THAT GOG IN PRINCIPAL WELCOMES ADDITIONAL CARRIERS WHICH WILL FURTHER STIMULATE GUATEMALA'S TOURISM SECTOR.

3. SALAZAR STATED THAT IN PAST TWO WEEKS REPRESENTATIVES OF EASTERN AND BRANIFF SEPARATELY HAD CALLED ON HIM TO ADVISE OF THEIR INTEREST IN GUATEMALA ROUTES. EASTERN HAS ALREADY SUBMITTED ITS APPLICATION TO BE CAB AND BRANIFF WILL DO SO

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SHORTLY. SALAZAR SAID HE WOULD BE DISCUSSING THE MATTER WITH PRESIDENT LUCAS SOON AND WILL SEEK PRESIDENT'S VIEWS, PARTICULARLY REGARDING IMPACT ON AVIATECA'S EXISTING ROUTES. HE ALSO WILL SEEK THE PRESIDENT'S AUTHORITY TO ACT AS CHIEF NEGOTIATOR. SALAZAR'S PERSONAL OPINION IS THAT GOG SHOULD UNDERTAKE INFORMAL PRELIMINARY NEGOTIATION WITH EACH CARRIER TO DISCUSS SPECIFICS. SALAZAR SAID THAT A POSSIBLE USG/GOG

BILATERAL AIR AGREEMENT WOULD BE UNDESIRABLE IN THIS CASE IN VIEW OF NECESSITY TO OBTAIN GUATEMALAN CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL, WHICH WOULD PROBABLY ENTAIL LENGTHY DELAY AND SOME CONTROVERSY.

4. COL. SALAZAR, FORMERLY CHIEF OF GUATEMALAN AIR FORCE, ADMITTED HE WAS A NOVICE ON CIVIL AIR TRANSPORT MATTERS AND REQUESTED THAT EMBASSY PROVIDE HIM ON AN INFORMAL BASIS COPIES OF SOME MODEL AGREEMENTS (MEXICO AND OTHERS) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO HELP HIM PREPARE FOR GOG/CARRIER NEGOTIATIONS. HE BELIEVES SUCH NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD PROTECT THE VARIOUS INTERESTS INVOLVED, INCLUDING PANAM AND AVIATECA, WHILE STILL MEETING THE GOG'S OBJECTIVES, WHICH INCLUDE INCREASED TOURISM, IMPROVED SERVICE AND LOWER PRICES COMPETITIVE WITH OTHER TOURIST AREAS SUCH AS EUROPE.

5. LOCAL NEWSPAPER PRENSA LIBRE ON AUGUST 25 CARRIED ARTICLE QUOTING ALVARO ARZU, DIRECTOR OF GUATEMALAN TOURISM INSTITUTE (INGUAT), AS STATING THAT PRESIDENT LUCAS WHOLEHEARTEDLY SUPPORTS INCREASED TOURISM PROGRAMS AND THAT AVIATECA WILL NOT BE AN OBSTACLE TO MORE FLIGHTS TO GUATEMALA BY ADDITIONAL CARRIERS.

6. PRENSA LIBRE AND EL IMPARCIAL OF AUGUST 25 ALSO CARRIED NEARLY IDENTICAL ARTICLES DATED WASHINGTON STATING THAT EASTERN HAS FILED APPLICATION WITH CAB FOR MIAMI-GUATEMALA LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ROUTE. EASTERN REPORTEDLY WOULD USE BOEING 727-100 AIRCRAFT. ARTICLES STATE FURTHER THAT PANAM HAS INFORMED CAB THAT ADDITIONAL FLIGHTS BY ANOTHER CARRIER ARE UNNECESSARY AND THAT APPROVAL OF EASTERN APPLICATION WOULD SERIOUSLY AFFECT THE BUSINESS OF THE TWO CARRIERS WHICH ALREADY OPERATE MIAMI-GUATEMALA (PANAM AND AVIATECA).

7. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY HAS BEEN APPROACHED BY BRANIFF CONCERNING THEIR INTEREST IN US/GUATEMALA ROUTE (EASTERN HAS NOT BEEN IN TOUCH WITH US). WE ALSO MAINTAIN CLOSE LOCAL CONTACT WITH PANAM, AVIATECA, DGAC AND MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS. IN ORDER TO BE AS WELL-BRIEFED AND UP-TO-DATE AS POSSIBLE, WOULD APPRECIATE ANY USEFUL BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND REPORT ON CURRENT STATUS OF APPLICATIONS BEFORE CAB. ALSO REQUEST COPIES OF MODEL AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENTS FOR INFORMAL TRANSMITTAL TO DGAC.  
BOSTER

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
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